

From: David Blaney
Sent: 26 February 2015 23:37
To: Morris, Huw (DfES)
Cc: Johnson, Andrew (Special Adviser); David Allen
Subject: Official sensitive: Glyndwr

Huw,

Thanks for the call earlier re the developing thinking regarding Glyndŵr. You were competing against the background noise of Gatwick, so I thought it would perhaps be sensible to make sure that I've properly understood what you were saying and, on the assumption that I have done so, that I share some thoughts on aspects you'd need to consider with this course of action. I am aware that you also had a conversation with Ewen Brierley on this issue today and have had an indication from him of the content of that discussion, which is consonant with my understanding.

From our discussion today, my understanding of the current WG position is:

1. The recent letter from Jon Shortridge to the Minister has not helped, particularly since it is considered to suggest a possible intention on the part of the Glyndŵr governors to seek an independent future.
2. The Minister is keen that Glyndŵr engage with the Webb process.
3. He is also keen that they are clear about the Ministerial determination to see a particular solution in NE Wales (which, presumably, is expected to result as a recommendation from the Webb process).
4. In order to underscore this position, the Minister wants Glyndŵr to be tied in now to implementation of the Webb outcomes.
5. WG are therefore exploring the possibility of making approval of our proposed cash flow support conditional on Glyndŵr committing to implementation of the Webb outcomes, perhaps with a phased approach in which the first element of support requires engagement with the process and subsequent elements require engagement with implementation of the outcomes.
6. The Minister is aware that, [Redacted under s43 Freedom of Information Act]

Let me know if I've got this wrong. I am aware that you are exploring the practicalities of this position with your lawyers tomorrow and I would be prepared to make arrangements to attend, as discussed earlier. Unless I've missed it, I don't think I've received details of where and when. I have a couple of calls scheduled in tomorrow which might need to be rearranged so I look forward to receiving the details as soon as you are able.

I think we all agree that it is appropriate for Glyndŵr to engage with the Webb process and I don't see a difficulty in making that a [Redacted under s40 Freedom of Information Act]. I think Graham Upton was clear in being prepared to do so in our previous discussions. I get the sense that some of the governors are less comfortable, which might mean that Graham has some work to do, but I don't know the details. Perhaps the potential governor coup that you were talking about has some relationship to this issue. David and I were clear in the meeting with the Minister yesterday that we still don't see a [Redacted under s40 Freedom of Information Act] Glyndŵr as a solution to the HE needs of NE Wales and I have picked up no sense in my recent discussions with Glyndŵr that this is viewed by them as an option. So, keeping them engaged in moving forward to an approach which requires proper and effective partnership with others, which will have to include [Redacted under s40 Freedom of Information Act] also seems sensible. I am less clear, though, that we can really expect them to commit now to implement the outcomes of the Webb process unless those outcomes have now been determined and can be shared with them. Otherwise, they won't know what it is they are committing to, and I'm not sure I understand how they could square that with their

responsibilities as governors and trustees. We agreed, I think, in the meeting with the Minister yesterday that the governors have legal responsibilities to determine the future direction of the university, as Jon has pointed out in his letter, so we will have to work with them rather than do things to them. Key to this was an agreement that we have to be supportive of Graham Upton and sensitive to the governing body (I'm copying in Andrew just in case I got this wrong). These are all perhaps aspects we should explore with your lawyers tomorrow.

[Redacted under s43 Freedom of Information Act]

Lots to think about! Let me know when the meeting is happening and I'll do my best to get there.

Cheers,

David.